

REMARKS

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I. Preliminary Remarks

Claims 1-43 have been cancelled. Claims 44-72 have been added. Claims 44-72 are now pending. No new matter has been added by this amendment. Reconsideration and allowance of all of the claims in view of the above amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

The double patenting rejection is noted. Accordingly, the Applicant cancelled the original claims 1-43 and added new claims 44-72 to overcome this rejection. Replacing the old claims with new claims was not done to overcome the prior art cited by the Examiner, as discussed below.

II. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. 112

Claims 7-10 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph as being indefinite. These claims have been cancelled so that this rejection is now moot.

III. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C 102(a) and 103(a)

The Office Action rejected claims 1-3, 5, 13, 14, 18, 22-24, and 39-43 under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Kurpiela, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,215,104 B1). Claims 1-5, 22, 25, and 28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Kosslow, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,524,809). Claims 1-9, 13, 15, 19-30, 32, 33, 37, and 38 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Cowell, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,329,085). Claims 1-5, 7-10, 15, 16, 18-24, 26-33, and 36-38 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Vella, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,773,582). And claims 12 and 35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious in view of Kosslow, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,524,809) and Rossnagel (U.S. Patent No. 5,843,197). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

Applicant's claimed invention is directed to providing a handle for a soldering iron that is replaceable so that a user may select a handle that is comfortable when used with the soldering iron. See paragraph 7 of the specification. To do this, a handle has an opening that is adapted to receive a sleeve. The sleeve has a proximal end and a distal end where the proximal end is adapted to couple to a connector to make electrical contact with the proximal end of the sleeve.

The distal end of the sleeve is adapted to couple to a tip. Once the handle is in place, the handle is between the proximal end and the distal end of the sleeve. To replace the sleeve even when it is hot, a user may hold onto the handle that insulates the user from the hot sleeve so that the user may pull the sleeve away from the connector. In this regard, new independent claims 44 57, 64, and 69 recite that handle is between a proximal end and a distal end of the sleeve. With the prior art cited by the Examiner, the handle is not between the proximal end and the distal end of the sleeve so that when the tip or sleeve is replaced when it is hot, a tool such as pliers may be needed to grab onto the sleeve to pull away from the handle.

None of the references cited by the Examiner teach or suggest a handle between a proximal end and a distal end of the sleeve. In Kurpiela (the '104 patent), the handle 19 is coupled to the distal end of the sleeve or the heating element 3 through the threaded flange. See Fig. 2, col. 8, lines 56-58. In Kosslow (the '809 patent), a protective heat shield 110 can move between a retracted position as shown in Fig. 2a and an advance protective position as shown in Fig. 2b. A switch 150 is on an iron casing or handle 180 to move back and forth to protective heat shield 110. As illustrated in Fig. 3, the iron tip 140 and the solder iron casing 130 extends from the iron casing or handle 180 rather than having the handle between a distal end and a proximal end of the solder iron casing 130. Cowell (the '085 patent) disclose a handle 30 that has an inside configuration to snugly receive the cartridge 2. See col. 5, lines 38-40 and Fig. 1 of the '085 patent. As such, the handle 30 is not between the distal and the proximal end of the cartridge 2. Vella (the '582 patent) shows in Fig. 3 a handle 82 having a heater assembly 80 extending from the handle rather than having the handle between the distal and proximal end of the heating element. Accordingly, independent claims and its respective dependent claims of this application are allowable over the cited references.

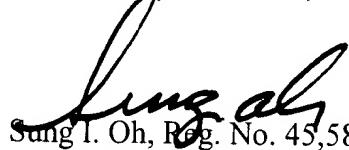
IV Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the claims in the application patentably distinguish over the cited and applied references and are in condition for allowance. Reexamination and reconsideration of the application, as amended, are respectfully requested.

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call Applicant's undersigned representative at (213) 689-5176 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 07-1853. Should such additional fees be associated with an extension of time, applicant respectfully requests that this paper be considered a petition therefore.

Respectfully submitted,



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